

REMARKS

The Office Action dated December 12, 2007 has been received and carefully studied.

The Examiner maintains the various rejections of claims 1-2 and 4-23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for reasons of record.

Although the Examiner no longer asserts that the term "cartridge" does not impart any structural limitation to the claims, the Examiner has taken the position what constitutes a "cartridge" is merely an issue of "nomenclature", and that the argument that the a cartridge, by definition, is removable from a pretreatment means to change the two elements independently is not stated in the claims and is not in the specification.

The rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner has mischaracterizing Applicant's arguments. Never did Applicants state that the definition of a cartridge is that it is removable from a pretreatment means to change the two elements independently. Applicants provided a definition of the term "cartridge" (a core, two end caps, a filter and an outer cage) to address the Examiner's contention that the term "cartridge" is not a structural limitation of the claims (the Examiner has now withdrawn this contention). Applicants then noted that the

claims require that pretreatment means be housed in the external cylindrical space of the container, and that the cartridge be housed in the internal cylindrical space of the container, and that the cartridge as so claimed is therefore independent of the pretreatment means. This is expressly recited in the claim, and is nowhere disclosed or suggested by Brown.

Claim 1 recites that the pretreatment means is housed in the external cylindrical space of the container and the cartridge is housed in the internal cylindrical space of the container. No such cartridge that is independent of pretreatment means is disclosed or suggested in this embodiment of Brown. Indeed, to the extent the Examiner is relying on element 15 of Figure 2 as an impermeable barrier layer that divides the container into two distinct cylindrical spaces, there is no cartridge housed in the internal cylindrical space so defined, as required by the instant claim 1.


Brown in numerous places indicates that the cartridge includes the combination of the prefilter 16, the reverse osmosis membrane permeator 11, and the post-filter 30. By providing a separate cartridge for the treatment means, the present invention has the advantage of changing that

cartridge without also changing the pretreatment means.
This is nowhere disclosed or suggested by Brown.

None of the secondary references supplies the above-noted deficiencies of Brown.

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing.

Respectfully submitted,


Kevin S. Lemack
Reg. No. 32,579
176 E. Main Street - Suite 5
Westboro, Massachusetts 01581
TEL: (508) 898-1818